

PATENTABILITY ARGUMENTS

A. Response to 35 U.S.C. §112 Second Paragraph Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claim 5 because he states that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "said pre-cut loom". Applicant agrees and has replaced this phrase with "said loom having a pre-cut slit along its length" in claim 5 and claim 6.

Next the Examiner rejects claim 6 because he states that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "said loop". Applicant agrees and has replaced this phrase with "said generally circular loop" in claim 6 and claim 7.

B. Response to 35 U.S.C. 102(b) Rejections

The Examiner states that claims 1, 2, 4 & 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Supkis *et al.* (US 6,749,179 B2). The Examiner further states that claims 3 and 5 through 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 second paragraph and include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1, 2 and 9 have been cancelled by Applicant, consequently this rejection is moot and should be removed. Claim 4 has been rewritten to depend from allowable claim 3, consequently this rejection is moot and should be removed.

REMARKS**C. Claim Amendments**

Applicant has amended claim 3 to include all the limitations of claim 1 as requested by the Examiner for allowance. Claim 4 has been amended to depend from claim 3 instead of now cancelled claim 1. Claim 5 has been amended by replacing "said pre-cut loom" with "said loom having a pre-cut slit along its length" on line 5 as requested by the Examiner. In addition Applicant has replaced "said pre-cut loom" with "said loom having a pre-cut slit along its length" in claim 6 on line 5 for consistency. Claim 6 has been further amended by the phrase "said loop" with the phrase "said generally circular loop" as requested by the Examiner and by placing dependence from new claim 10 instead of cancelled claim 2. In addition, Applicant has replaced "said loop" with the phrase "said generally circular loop" in claim 7 on line 2 for consistency.

To the best of their knowledge Applicant's believe that the amendments to the specification do not add new matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above arguments present Applicant has amended the claims and demonstrated that the invention as claimed satisfies the statutory requirements for patentability. Applicant's respectfully request that the Examiner issue an allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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